Skills Within Your Reach — Lesson 1: Setting Up Your Seated Workspace and Your First Computer Steps

Ngang Memorial Higher Online School

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Our guiding principle: we guide each learner on the things they CAN do, so they become better in that domain.

This is the companion document for the video lesson of the same name. Every step is done seated. Work at your own pace. Pause the video whenever you wish, and repeat any step as many times as you need.

Before you begin

You need: a chair that supports your back, a desk or table, and a computer with a keyboard and a pointer (a mouse, a touchpad, or another pointing device that works for you). If a helper is nearby for the first setup, that is welcome — the goal is a workspace that you can then use on your own.

Step 1 — Settle your chair

Sit so your back is supported and your feet rest in a comfortable, stable position. If you use a wheelchair, set your brakes or power as you normally do for desk work. Move close enough to the desk that you do not need to lean or stretch forward.

Step 2 — Bring everything within easy reach

Place the keyboard directly in front of you, where your hands rest on it without reaching. Place the pointer beside the keyboard, on the side of the hand you prefer. Keep your notebook, pen, and water within the same easy reach. Anything you must stretch for, move closer now.

Step 3 — Set the screen

The screen should face you directly, about an arm's length away. The top of the screen should be near eye level, or a little below. If glare makes the screen hard to see, turn the screen slightly or close a curtain. Raise the text size in the computer settings if that helps you — larger text is a good, normal choice.

Step 4 — Open the computer

Press the power button once, and wait. Computers take a little time to wake up. When the sign-in screen appears, type your password slowly, one key at a time, and press Enter. If you make a typing mistake, press Backspace to remove the last letter and try again. Mistakes in typing are normal for everyone.

Step 5 — Know your keyboard

Find these keys by touch or by sight: the letter keys in the middle, the Space bar (the long key at the bottom), Enter, Backspace, and Shift. The F and J keys on most keyboards have a small raised mark — feel for them. Rest your fingers lightly. You do not need to type fast. Accuracy first; speed grows with practice.

Step 6 — Use the pointer at your own pace

Move the pointer slowly across the screen. Practice three things: move to a point and stop; click once to select something; double-click to open something. If double-clicking is hard, your computer settings can make the double-click slower and easier — a helper or teacher can show you that setting. Many tasks also work with a single click followed by the Enter key.

Step 7 — Type your name

Open a word-processing program or a simple text editor. Type your first name, one letter at a time. Press Space, then type your family name. Read what you typed. Fix any letter that is wrong: click just after it, press Backspace, and type the right letter.

Step 8 — Save your first document

Press and hold the Ctrl key, then press S (on some computers, use the File menu and choose Save). Type a file name you will remember, for example: my-first-document. Choose a place you can find again, such as Documents. Press Enter or click Save. You have now created and saved your first document.

Step 9 — Close and rest

Save once more with Ctrl and S. Close the program. Sit back, relax your shoulders, and rest your hands. Short practice sessions, repeated often, work better than one long session.

Lesson check

You have finished Lesson 1 when you can:

- Describe how your chair, desk, keyboard, pointer, and screen are arranged.
- Open the computer and sign in.

- Find Space, Enter, Backspace, and Shift without help.
- Type your name and save a first document.

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